

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-9 are pending. By this Amendment, claim 2 is cancelled, claims 1, 3, and 4 are amended, no new claims being added.

Claim 1 is amended to include the limitations of canceled claim 2.

Claim 2 is canceled without prejudice, Applicants reserving the right to prosecute the claims as originally filed in one or more continuing applications.

Claims 3 and 4 are amended to depend solely from claim 1. Claim 3 is further amended to recite "the third connector" to correct antecedence, the foregoing limitation now being recited in claim 1.

No new matter has been added by the amendments to the pending claims.

35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 3/1 or 3/2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Amended claim 1 recites "a third connector" therein. Further, amended claim 3, which depends from claim 1, recites "the third connector" therein. Accordingly, it is believed that amended claim 3 particularly points out and distinctly claims the subject matter thereof.

35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a)

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 3/1, and 8/1 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by either Hogg (US Patent 3,482,786) or Friedman et al. (US Patent 3,184,169). Further, claims 5, 6, and 8/5/1 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either of Hogg or Friedman et al. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Hogg or Friedman et al. in view of Davis (US Patent 4,222,527).

However the Examiner stated that claims 2, 4/1, 4/2/1, and 7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

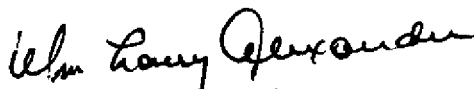
In response thereto, claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 2 and claim 2 has been canceled without prejudice. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

Further claims 3 to 9 ultimately depend from amended claim 1. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that claims 3 to 9 are also allowable by virtue of being dependent upon an allowable claim.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner believes it would be useful to advance prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,



Wm. Larry Alexander
Registration No. 37,269

Customer No. 24113
Patterson, Thunte, Skaar & Christensen, P.A.
4800 IDS Center
80 South 8th Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-2100
Telephone: (612) 349-5757